Harold H. Higgins

1941

# All Eyes!

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Twenty-seventh Annual Report
of the
National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc.
1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

1941

Photograph, courtesy of *Parents' Mc*

All Eyes—For Victory

# All Eyes!

TOTAL war effort needs all eyes. To paraphrase the current slogans, we must "keep 'em seeing." It does not require war to make us conscious of the importance of good eyesight, but war emphasizes that importance. Blindness is at all times both a hardship to the individual and a handicap to society. In war defective vision impairs military and industrial effort, while the circumstances from which it may occur are multiplied.

There are uncounted thousands of persons with defective vision whose sight could have been conserved if they had received adequate eye care in time. In addition, there are approximately 200,000 men, women and children in the United States who have lost their sight completely through disease or injury. The tragedy of such loss, with its attendant suffering, lies in the fact that most of this blindness would not have occurred if proper precautions had been taken at the right time.

The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness is dedicated to the task of safeguarding eyes in every walk of life. We shall never know how many Americans can see today because of its varied activities, but we have evidence of definite accomplishments in the great reduction of blindness from particular causes on which the Society has concentrated its program of public education. Much more remains to be done, however, and we need the continued support of everyone whose interest can be enlisted in this movement.

This annual report, intended both for the hundreds working throughout the country to conserve vision and for the Society's 21,000 members and donors, reviews the highlights of projects undertaken during the past year. May I take this opportunity of thanking everyone who is contributing in time, funds, and thought to the safeguarding of all eyes.

Mason H. Ligelow

*President*

# Résumé of Activities

IN THE brief résumé of activities during 1941, an attempt is made to point out how the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness calls upon and supplements the forces affecting the eye health and safety of the nation.

## Industry

Expansion of industry and the speed-up of production in the drive for victory have placed a heavy responsibility on eyes. The Society's program for protection of eyes in industry is integrated with the activities of the many agencies now engaged in meeting the call for 100% efforts for safety in defense work. To learn the extent of safe practices as they relate to eyesight in typical plants, a self-appraisal form was prepared under the guidance of the Industrial Advisory Committee,* and data were obtained from 34 representative plants.

"The Eyes in National Defense" was an important topic of discussion which attracted wide attention during the Society's recent Biennial Conference. Co-operation continued, as usual, with safety councils, health and labor departments, and governmental agencies. The talking-slide film, "The Eyes Have It," continued to be much in demand by industrial, educational, and insurance groups. In the past year and a half, 342 prints were distributed to thousands of industrial plants, reaching hundreds of thousands of workers.

*Eye Hazards in Industry*, published by Columbia University Press, is a monument to the author, Louis Resnick, whose death occurred just three days after the manuscript was completed. "This book is a timely aid to the current drive on production for national defense," stated H. W. Heinrich, of the Travelers Insurance Company, in one of the many favorable reviews which this book has received.

## Medical Relationships

The American Medical Association, for the fifth consecutive year, generously contributed space during its annual meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, for an exhibit presenting the Society's work.

* Listed on p. 9.

Representatives of the Society had an opportunity to meet and discuss common problems with hundreds of physicians at the Society's booth. Similar opportunities were afforded at the meetings of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology, in Chicago; the American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons and the American Industrial Hygiene Association, in Pittsburgh; the American Public Health Association, in Atlantic City; and the American Hospital Association, in Atlantic City.

The medical profession has co-operated whole-heartedly in the campaign to prevent blindness from glaucoma. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Mark J. Schoenberg, the Society's Committee on Glaucoma* has undertaken a demonstration project in connection with clinic procedures. Fifteen hospitals in New York City are participating by organizing special services for glaucoma patients, as outlined in the Committee's recommendations for services. This demonstration will not only provide unusual opportunities for maintaining the vision of glaucoma patients, but will also contribute to the accumulation of valuable research data.

Typical of the response from professional circles regarding this enterprise was the editorial by Dr. Derrick T. Vail, editor-in-chief of the *American Journal of Ophthalmology*, who said, in part: "The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness has undertaken the sponsorship of this magnificent work. Their campaign for the reduction of the percentage of partial or total loss of vision from glaucoma not only invites but demands the support and co-operation of not only ophthalmologic organizations but also those of the optometric and public health bodies."

## Nursing Relationships

An outstanding event of the year in the nursing activities of the Society was the summer course in sight conservation given for nurses at the University of Minnesota under the joint sponsorship of the Society, the Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology, and the Minnesota Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Twenty-seven nurses registered for this course, which was the first college course in any aspect of eye health which was specifically planned for nurses.

* Listed on p. 9.

Institutes for nurses have been continued in co-operation with state departments of public health and with leagues of nursing education. Eighteen institute sessions were held in the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Missouri, and Texas.

The Society has continued working with the National League of Nursing Education in a study of the preparation of nurses for nursing in eye conditions, and is receiving increased requests from schools of nursing for assistance in their educational program. Similarly, the Society has co-operated with the National Organization for Public Health Nursing, especially in relation to its project in the development of consultant service in the field of industrial nursing.

## Medical Social Work

Growth is noted in the number of professional workers engaged in eye services in hospitals and clinics and in the number of institutions that are seriously considering the employment of medical social workers in eye services. During 1941 the Society conducted the fifth eye health institute at its headquarters, and sponsored a four-months' course at the George Warren Brown Department of Social Work, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri. In addition, the need for trained personnel was so great that the Society was called upon to extend tutorial services in its office to a number of workers employed for specific community sight conservation programs. Their periods of intensive study with staff members varied from ten days to a month.

In demonstrating the possibilities for sight conservation through medical social services in eye clinics, the Society collaborated with the St. Louis University Hospital, St. Louis; University of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia; and the University of Kansas Hospital, Kansas City. A purpose of these demonstrations is to prove the value of medical social service with eye patients, so that such service may be made more generally available throughout the country. It is hoped also, through the study of records from these three demonstration centers, to be able to compare the causes of defective vision among patients in these clinics with the major causes of blindness occurring in their respective states.

The Society again participated in the National Conference of

Social Work. In addition, the Society was represented at a number of state conferences of social work and exhibit booths were maintained.

## Educational Activities

The Society again co-operated in meeting the need for the preparation of supervisors and teachers of sight-saving classes by participating in the special courses given at Wayne University, Detroit; Western Reserve University, Cleveland; and State Teachers College, Buffalo. The last two presented advanced courses, which were given at the special request of many teachers who had taken the elementary courses and felt the need of opportunities for discussing their problems.

The American Student Health Association, which is carrying on the program of eye health of college students, initiated by the Society several years ago, held its annual meeting in New York City in December. The Society collaborated by maintaining an exhibit and assisting with the program in which the subject of eye health of college students was an important topic.

## State Prevention of Blindness Programs

Recommendations for the development of statewide programs for prevention of blindness, based on studies of existing facilities and needs of states, were made by the Society at the invitation of the Maine Commissioner of Health and Welfare and the Louisiana Commissioner of Public Welfare. Other localities which have received the assistance and advice of the Society in the development of their programs include: District of Columbia, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Texas.

The series of studies of causes of blindness by the Committee on Statistics of the Blind, in which the Society is an active participant, continues to serve as a basis for prevention of blindness programs. A study of state legislation related to blindness and the conservation of vision was made available to the Society through the volunteer services of Professor John W. McConnell, of the Department of Political Science and Sociology of New York University, who presented a summary during the Society's Biennial

Conference. It is expected that the published report of the summary of this valuable study will be of great assistance to various state agencies directly or indirectly concerned with the responsibilities of sight conservation.

## Public Information

Taking advantage of the persuasiveness of the human voice for public education, the Society brought its message to an audience of millions through 750 broadcasts in 1941, the most extensive program of radio publicity for any year in its history. In addition to the radio as a means of public information, the usual channels of newspapers, magazines, exhibits, and film showings were utilized to reach the general public. More than a quarter of a million pamphlets were distributed by the Society and nearly a hundred communities received exhibit material on eye health. Typical occasions for reaching varied groups included: Social Hygiene Day; National Negro Health Week; American Optometric Association meeting; American Student Health Association meeting; meeting of the International Council of Exceptional Children; and National Safety Congress.

The Society's Biennial Conference offered broad opportunities for public education, covering such topics as: Mobilization of State Forces for Prevention of Blindness; Prevention of Blindness from Glaucoma—Medical and Social Aspects; Sight Conservation on the Advancing Fronts of Public Health and Nutrition; Hereditary Factors as Causes of Blindness; Prenatal Factors as Causes of Blindness; Restoration of Sight and Prevention of Blindness in Adults; Eye Protection in the Defense Industries; Eye Problems in Selective Service; Care of Partially Seeing Children. Most of these papers will be published in the *Sight-Saving Review* or as supplements, and will be available upon request.

## In Memoriam

The Society announces with sadness the loss of Rt. Rev. William Lawrence, D.D., Honorary President; and Louis Resnick, Industrial Relations Director.

## Voluntary Advisory Committees

The Society acknowledges with gratitude its indebtedness to its various voluntary committees and wishes at this time to name the members of two of the most active committees—the Committee on Glaucoma and the Industrial Advisory Committee. In addition to staff representation, the following are listed:

### Committee on Glaucoma (New York)

Mark J. Schoenberg, M.D., *Chairman.*
Rudolf Aebli, M.D., Lenox Hill Hospital.
Ellice M. Alger, M.D.
Wilmot B. Allen, M.D., Bronx Eye and Ear Infirmary.
Conrad Berens, M.D., New York Eye and Ear Infirmary.
David T. Bishop, M.D., Brooklyn Eye and Ear Infirmary.
Mrs. Arthur J. Cohen, Board of Trustees, Mt. Sinai Hospital.
Eleanore Conover, M.D., United Hospital Fund of New York.
John N. Evans, M.D., Long Island College Hospital.
W. Guernsey Frey, M.D., St. Luke's Hospital.
Grace S. Harper, New York State Department of Social Welfare.
Daniel B. Kirby, M.D., Bellevue Hospital.
Isaac D. Kruskal, M.D., Brooklyn Jewish Hospital.
Robert K. Lambert, M.D., Montefiore Hospital.
Clyde E. McDannald, M.D., Polyclinic Hospital.
John N. McLean, M.D., New York Hospital.
Raymond L. Pfeiffer, M.D., New York State Department of Social Welfare.
Algernon B. Reese, M.D., Vanderbilt Clinic Medical Center.
John P. Ruppe, M.D., Supt., New York Eye and Ear Infirmary.
Bernard Samuels, M.D., New York Eye and Ear Infirmary.
Kaufman Schlivek, M.D., Mt. Sinai Hospital.
Henry Mitchell Smith, M.D., Long Island College Hospital.
David H. Webster, M.D., Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital.
James W. White, M.D., Post-Graduate Hospital.

### Industrial Advisory Committee

Leonard Greenburg, M.D., New York State Department of Labor, *Chairman.*
Roy S. Bonsib, Standard Oil Company of New Jersey.
Morris Davidson, M.D., New York State Department of Labor.
Edward R. Granniss, National Conservation Bureau.
Harry Guilbert, The Pullman Company.
Alice Hamilton, M.D.
Charles E. Hill, New York Central Lines.
Hedwig S. Kuhn, M.D.
Harold L. Miner, E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company.
George E. Sanford, General Electric Company.
Harvey Saul, National Association of Manufacturers.
John J. Wittmer, M.D., Consolidated Edison Company of New York.
Verne A. Zimmer, U. S. Department of Labor.

# Summary of Finances

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|---|---|---|---|
| EXPENSES DURING 1941 | | | |
| Office Maintenance | | $21,706.63 | |
| Salaries | | 88,772.87 | |
| Accounting and Auditing | | 2,030.00 | |
| Field Service | | 6,257.65 | |
| Publications and Exhibits | | 14,177.83 | |
| Distribution Costs | | 14,747.46 | |
| Meetings and Courses | | 4,272.60 | |
| Co-operative Projects | | 5,037.47 | |
| Annuities and Insurance | | 3,300.79 | |
| Vision Testing Charts | | 2,563.06 | |
| Film—"The Eyes Have It" | | 1,122.30 | |
| *Total Expenses, 1941* | | | $163,988.66 |
| INCOME DURING 1941 | | | |
| Donations | | | |
| New | $13,427.68 | | |
| Renewal | 78,260.56 | $91,688.24 | |
| Memberships | | | |
| New | 759.50 | | |
| Renewal | 15,501.35 | 16,260.85 | |
| From Endowment and Reserve Funds | | 14,363.90 | |
| From Wendel Foundation | | 9,002.49 | |
| From Trust Funds (not administered by the Society) | | 2,761.39 | |
| From Sale of Films, *Sight-Saving Review*, other publications, and honoraria | | 7,456.05 | |
| *Total Income, 1941* | | | 141,532.92 |
| Excess of Expenses over Income, 1941 | | | $ 22,455.74 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Total resources at December 31, 1940, including mortgages, securities and real estate at book value | $433,357.93 |
| Withdrawn from the Reserve Fund to meet Excess of Expenses over Income during 1941 | 22,455.74 |
| | $410,902.19 |
| Net additions to Endowment, Reserve and Special and Designated Funds during 1941, from legacies, special gifts, etc. | 38,032.25 |
| Total resources at December 31, 1941, including mortgages, securities and real estate at book value | $448,934.44* |

* This does not include the following: Trust Funds not administered by the Society, aggregating $70,000.00; 1/40th share in the unliquidated properties of the Wendel Foundation; ⅛th share in the unliquidated and undistributed assets of the Mary L. C. Earle Estate (consisting principally of country real estate of uncertain value); and the Society's interest in various estates in course of administration.

The foregoing statement is based on the report of Frederick Fischer, Jr., C.P.A., by whom the accounts of the Society were audited. A copy of the report will be sent to anyone requesting it.

The Executive Director is required by the Board of Directors to submit a detailed statement of proposed expenditures and to account for all sums spent in accordance with budget appropriations. Vouchers are on file for every expenditure.

The record for the year 1941 is especially heartening as regards the number of individuals making voluntary contributions toward the work of the Society. More than twenty-one thousand members and donors, the largest number in the past ten years, sent gifts aggregating $107,949.09. A broadening base of support not only betokens a higher degree of financial stability, but greater public interest in the Society's work.

In accordance with its policy of previous years, the Board of Directors approved the use of part of the Reserve Fund for current purposes. Although $22,455.74 were withdrawn from the Reserve Fund, net additions through legacies, special gifts, etc., totalled $38,032.25, resulting in an increase of $15,576.51 in the Society's resources at book value.

The number of legacies received by the Society during recent years is encouraging. During 1941 payments on account of legacies aggregating $34,319.95 were received from twelve estates.

## Form of Bequest

I give and bequeath to the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc., a corporation created under the laws of the State of New York, the sum of _____ Dollars for its corporate purposes.

## National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc.

1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

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Helen Keller
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